

Latimer, Becky

From: PSCSC Communications
Sent: Sunday, March 21, 2021 1:23 PM
To: Duke, Daphne; Latimer, Becky
Subject: FW: [External] SC must commit to renewableenergy, reject solar rate increase

Mr. Isto would like his comments added to the Docket.

From: Ed Isto <edisto@psc.sc.gov>
Sent: Sunday, March 21, 2021 1:04 PM
To: PSCSC Communications <communications@psc.sc.gov>
Subject: [External] SC must commit to renewableenergy, reject solar rate increase

Our View: SC must commit to renewable energy, reject solar rate increase

City Paper Editorial Board

Mar. 17, 2021

Rays and Rates

The cost to produce solar energy is getting cheaper, but Dominion Energy wants to make it more expensive for normal consumers who want to add renewable solar power. The South Carolina Public Service Commission (PSC) must reject Dominion's proposed solar net metering rate changes this month.

It's sad, but in recent years, South Carolina power companies have done absolutely nothing to earn the trust of local residents. SCE&G hiked electricity rates over and over to raise billions for the doomed expansion of the V.C. Summer nuclear plant, leaving its customers holding the bag.

Now comes its successor, Dominion, which knows that solar power is less profitable for it and that its [proposed changes would raise prices](#) for customers who want to get off the grid with solar and buy less of Dominion's electricity. The utility claims it is requesting the change to make sure solar customers still cover their share of costs for maintaining the company's infrastructure.

Solar customers would still be able to sell excess power back to Dominion under the proposed arrangement, but with added fees. One critic testified that added charges would decrease the value of residential solar by 55%. Solar hardware vendors in the state say the market for their products could dry up if new costs eat into consumers' returns on investments.

Duke Energy worked with environmental groups to craft its own solar net-metering plan for its S.C. customers. Dominion has chosen to roll the dice with state regulators.

Dominion must have PSC approval for a solar rate structure by May 31 as part of the [2019 Energy Freedom Act](#) passed in the wake of the V.C. Summer boondoggle. S.C. Sen. Tom Davis of Beaufort, the libertarian-leaning author of the law who is no fan of overregulation, did not mince words about the intent of the new rules in 2019.

"It is a first and important step away from the energy-production monopolies that have saddled South Carolinians with some of the highest electricity bills in the nation, and toward real competition through an open market of many buyers and many sellers that will provide downward pressure on the cost of producing energy," Davis wrote.

Not only does Dominion's proposal appear to be a shameless cash grab, it flies in the face of the reality of technological innovation, climate change and South Carolina regulators' purported prioritization of renewable energy sources.



Latimer, Becky

From: Latimer, Becky
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 9:11 AM
To: ,
Subject: 2020-229-E Isto

Dear Ed Isto:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your Letter of Protest/Comments to the Public Service Commission of South Carolina. Your Letter of Protest/Comments will be placed in the Protest File of the Docket listed below and on the Commission's Website at www.psc.sc.gov.

- Docket No. 2020-229-E - Dominion Energy South Carolina, Incorporated's Establishment of a Solar Choice Metering Tariff Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 58-40-20 (See Docket No. 2019-182-E)

A Protestant is an individual objecting on the ground of private or public interest to the approval of an Application, Petition, Motion or other matters which the Commission may have under consideration. A Protestant may offer sworn testimony but cannot cross-examine witnesses offered by other parties.

According to the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, filing a Protest does not make you a Party of Record. A Protestant desiring to become an Intervenor (i.e., a Party of Record) in a proceeding before the Commission may file a Petition for Intervention within the time prescribed by the Commission.

You can follow this Docket and other daily filings made at the Commission by subscribing to the Commission's Email Subscription at this link: <https://dms.psc.sc.gov/Web/Email>; or you can specifically follow Docket No. 2020-229-E at this link: <https://dms.psc.sc.gov/Web/Dockets/Detail/117571>

If we may be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,
Becky Latimer

The price of solar generation has dropped 45% over the past decade, according to the Solar Energy Industries Association. South Carolina was the seventh-highest solar-generating state in the nation last year and is poised to double in size again over the next five years — if solar power remains affordable for consumers.

Another Statehouse critic of Dominion said consumers should be wary of the company's efforts to maintain the status quo.

"You should be very skeptical of anything that looks like an institutional effort to cement its legacy practices in the midst of a shift in the power generation paradigm — very, very skeptical," S.C. Rep. Micah Caskey, R-Lexington, told *The State* on March 12.

Three months ago, public service commissioners unanimously rejected Dominion's proposed renewable energy plan that was decried by conservation attorneys as a "do-nothing" plan because it did not consider possible options, leaning heavily on fossil fuel energy.

Dominion's current proposal is just as short-sighted and blind to reality.

South Carolina regulators must follow their own principles and deny Dominion's proposed solar net-metering plan.